

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7 and 9-12 are pending in this application.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Baran at the interview held April 1, 2008, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-6 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wellman et al. (Wellman), U.S. Patent No. 6,212,449, in view of Poulson et al. (Poulson), U.S. Patent No. 7,231,757. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the interview, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest an identification process instruction means that is installed in an information center to find arising of a vehicle fault and to instruct the vehicle to perform a fault identification process for identifying the cause of the vehicle fault, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 5.

Wellman discloses a diagnostic system that leads service personnel step-by-step through diagnosis and repair of a vehicle (see Abstract). The diagnostic system generates event codes that correspond to possible faults within the vehicle (see col. 6 lines, 19-27). Wellman teaches that the event codes corresponding to the vehicle fault can be provided online to a computer (see col. 7, lines 66 and 67 through col. 8, line 1). The Office Action implies that the online computer corresponds to the claimed information center. However, Wellman merely teaches that the online computer functions to display the diagnostic information to a user (see col. 8, lines 1-3), not instruct the vehicle to perform a fault identification process. The absence of this feature is apparent by the fact that Wellman teaches that it is preferable to display the diagnostic information in a hard copy print out (see col. 7, lines 63-66 and col. 8, lines 7-9). Poulson is only cited for allegedly disclosing the

feature of a recovery process execution means (see below). Therefore, Poulson fails to overcome the deficiencies of Wellman. Thus, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest an identification process instruction means that is installed in the information center to find arising of the vehicle fault and to instruct the vehicle to perform a fault identification process for identifying the cause of the vehicle fault, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 5.

Further, as discussed during the interview, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest an identified fault countermeasure means that is installed in the information center to take countermeasures against the identified fault, as recited in independent claim 1.

As discussed above, the online computer (allegedly corresponding to the claimed information center) only functions to display the diagnostic information to a user (see col. 8, lines 1-3). There is no teaching or suggestion in Wellman that the online computer takes any countermeasures against an identified fault. Poulson fails to overcome this deficiency of Wellman. Therefore, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest an identified fault countermeasure means that is installed in the information center to take countermeasures against the identified fault, as recited in independent claim 1.

Furthermore, with respect to independent claims 1 and 5, the Office Action acknowledges that Wellman does not disclose or suggest a recovery process execution means that is installed in the vehicle to perform the recovery process that is instructed. The Office Action asserts that Poulson overcomes this deficiency.

Poulson discloses a control system for a lawn cutting reel unit that can be carried by, or attached to, a vehicle such as a tractor (see col. 2, lines 47-50). Actuators in the lawn cutting reel unit are configured to adjust the reel-to-bedknife clearance (see col. 2 lines 65-67, and col. 3, lines 1-3). Poulson further teaches that the cutting reel unit control system can be

automatically self-adjusting by periodically correcting reel-to-bedknife clearance depending on the conditions of the grass to be mowed (see col. 2, lines 57-61). The reel-to bedknife clearance also can be adjusted by user control or by a location sensor that communicates with a ground-based system or a global positioning system (see col. 3 lines 7-13). However, as discussed during the interview, one of ordinary skill in the relevant art would have no reason to modify the teachings of Wellman with Poulson. Specifically, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have looked to a lawn mower cutting reel when trying to provide a vehicle fault diagnostic system capable of taking early countermeasures against a vehicle fault.

Further, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest a recovery process execution means that is installed in the vehicle to perform the recovery process that is instructed, as recited in independent claims 1 and 5.

Poulson explicitly teaches that the lawn cutting reel unit can be carried by, or attached to a vehicle, such as a tractor, but not installed in the vehicle (see col. 2, lines 49-51). Therefore, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest a recovery process execution means that is installed in the vehicle to perform the recovery process that is instructed, as recited in independent claims 1 and 5.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 5, and dependent claims 3, 4, 6 and 11 are patentable over the combination of Wellman and Poulson for at least these reasons. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 7, 9, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wellman in view of Poulson, and further in view of Chou et al. (Chou), U.S. Patent No. 6,330,499. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

For the reasons discussed above and during the personal interview, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest an identification process instruction means that is installed in an information center to find arising of a vehicle fault and to instruct the

vehicle to perform a fault identification process for identifying the cause of the vehicle fault, as recited in independent claim 7. Chou fails to overcome the deficiencies of Wellman and Poulson.

Additionally, for the reasons discussed above, the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest a recovery process execution means that is installed in the vehicle to perform the recovery process that is instructed, as recited in independent claim 7.

Furthermore, as discussed during the interview, Chou does not disclose or suggest a supply information limiting means for supplying the detected information about the fault to the information center only when the serious degree exceeds a judgment value, as recited in independent claim 7.

The Office Action acknowledges that the combination of Wellman and Poulson does not disclose or suggest a fault seriousness determining means for determining the serious degree of a detected fault in accordance with the magnitude of the fault characteristic value, and supply information limiting means for supplying the detected information about the fault to the information center only when the serious degree exceeds a judgment value. The Office Action cites Chou as allegedly overcoming the deficiencies of Wellman and Poulson.

Chou discloses a client computer device 101 that communicates with a remote service center 200 by means of a network interface 107 (see col. 4, lines 39-41). The client computer device sends requests for diagnostic services to the remote service center 200 (see col. 4, lines 42 and 43). Chou also discloses the generation of trouble codes by an ECU 103 of a vehicle, which are then sent to a diagnostic client 421 that classifies the severity of the trouble codes into a predetermined severity class (see col. 6, lines 55-63). However, Chou is silent on the feature of limiting the information that it sends to the remote service center 200. Instead, Chou teaches that remote vehicle health checkups can be performed where a connection is

made between a cell phone 102 in the vehicle and a diagnostic server 201 in the remote service center 200 (see col. 5, lines 1-9). The result of this vehicle health check up session is that the diagnostic server 201 either indicates that the vehicle is in good health or that there are problems requiring immediate attention (see col. 5, lines 9-11), thereby indicating that vehicle diagnostic information is sent to the remote service center 200 regardless of severity. Therefore, the combination of Wellman, Poulson and Chou does not disclose or suggest a supply information limiting means for supplying the detected information about the fault to the information center only when the serious degree exceeds a judgment value, as recited in independent claim 7.

Therefore, independent claim 7 and dependent claims 9 and 10 are patentable over the combination of Wellman, Poulson and Chou for at least these reasons. Claim 12 is patentable at least because of its dependence from claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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